

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 4548

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PN, PFOR

SUBJ: CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: LOPEZ GUEVARA SPEECH

SUMMARY: IN PUBLIC LECTURE ON CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, AMBASSADOR LOPEZ GUEVARA BROKE NEW GROUND BY SAYING IN ESSENCE TO PANAMANIAN PUBLIC THAT PANAMA WOULD HAVE TO COMPROMISE SHORT-TERM GOALS TO ACHIEVE ITS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE. COMPROMISE WAS PART OF PRICE PANAMA MUST PAY FOR LIBERATION. LOPEZ GUEVARA QUOTED FROM STATEMENTS BY AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND SECRETARY KISSINGER TO DEMONSTRATE THAT US WAS EXAMINING ITS CONSCIENCE CONCERNING US PRESENCE IN CANAL ZONE AND CONCLUDED HIS LECTURE WITH STATEMENT THAT GOP ACCEPTED PROMISE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT NIXON THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE CONDUCTED WITH SPEED AND IN FRAMEWORK OF JUSTICE AND MUTUAL RESPECT. THIS WAS FIRST PUBLIC RESPONSE BY GOP OFFICIAL TO CHARGES RAISED BY CRITICS OF EIGHT-POINT AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES THAT LATTER WOULD NOT PROVIDE BASIS FOR REALIZATION OF PANAMA'S GOALS AND WAS THE MOST POSITIVE PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS HAVE MADE ON NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY

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1. DR. CARLOS LOPEZ GUEVARA, MEMBER OF FOREIGN

MINISTRY'S TREATY NEGOTIATING GROUP, GAVE A LECTURE AT COLON CITY COUNCIL AUDITORIUM, JULY 31, ENTITLED "REFLECTIONS ON THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES TO STRUCTURE A REGIME FOR THE PANAMA CANAL IN HARMONY WITH THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS." THIS WAS FIRST MAJOR PUBLIC STATEMENT BY GOP OFFICIAL IN SEVERAL MONTHS CONCERNING CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. LECTURE CONSISTED OF FOUR MAJOR PARTS. PART I CALLED UPON UNITED STATES TO EXAMINE ITS CONSCIENCE TO DETERMINE IF IT COULD MORALLY JUSTIFY ITS PRESENCE, AS NOW CONSTITUTED, IN CANAL ZONE. PART II REVIEWED PARTS OF POPE JOHN XXIII'S PACEM IN TERRIS AND UN CHARTER TO SHOW THAT US PRESENCE IN CANAL ZONE WAS CONTRARY TO ACCEPTED NORMS OF JUSTICE AND MORAL LAW, AND VIOLATED ARTICLES OF UN CHARTER.

2. PART III CONTAINED ASSERTION US IS EXAMINING ITS CONSCIENCE AND, AS EVIDENCE OF THIS, CONTAINED QUOTES FROM STATEMENTS MADE FEBRUARY 7 IN PANAMA AND ON OTHER OCCASIONS BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND AMBASSADOR BUNKER.

3. ALTHOUGH FIRST THREE SECTIONS OF LOPEZ GUEVARA'S LECTURE CONTAINED NOTHING UNUSUAL, THE FOURTH, AND MOST SIGNIFICANT SECTION WHICH DEALT WITH CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS, WAS NEW INASMUCH AS IT JUSTIFIED COMPROMISE WITH US. HE DESCRIBED NEGOTIATIONS AS PART OF LONG-TERM PROCESS TO ACHIEVE PANAMA'S INDEPENDENCE. THE PROCESS, HE SAID, BEGAN NOVEMBER 10, 1821 AT VILLA DE LOS SANTOS AND IN PRESENT PHASE GOP HAD CHOSEN NEGOTIATION AS METHOD OF ACHIEVING THIS GOAL. SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION REQUIRED CONSENT OF BOTH SIDES, NOT AN IMPOSITION OF WILL OF ONE SIDE OVER THE OTHER. HE THEN SAID IT WAS TRUE, AS CRITICS HAD ARGUED, THAT PANAMA'S OBJECTIVE WAS INCOMPATIBLE IN BOTH SHORT AND LONG-TERM WITH US OBJECTIVE OF CONTINUING TO ADMINISTER AND DEFEND CANAL. HE SAID POSITIONS WERE IRRECONCILABLE IN SHORT-RUN BECAUSE US WOULD REJECT A TREATY WHICH ACCOMPLISHED PANAMA'S OBJECTIVE AND IRRECONCILABLE IN LONG-RUN BECAUSE CONTINUED US CONTROL

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WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO PERPETUITY WHICH PANAMA WAS SEEKING TO ERADICATE. BUT, SAID LOPEZ GUEVARA, US AND PANAMANIAN OBJECTIVES COULD "BE RECONCILED ON A MEDIUM-TERM BASIS," WITH PANAMA GRANTING TO US CERTAIN RIGHTS WHICH WOULD END IN THIS CENTURY. NEW TREATY WOULD SPECIFY VARIOUS STAGES DURING WHICH US WOULD DIVEST ITSELF OF RIGHTS PANAMA HAD GRANTED TO IT AND WOULD DELINEATE STAGES AT WHICH US MILITARY FORCES WOULD BE REDUCED, UNTIL THERE IS COMPLETE DISAPPEARANCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN PANAMA.

4. SUCH A TREATY, ACCORDING TO LOPEZ GUEVARA, WILL BE "AN INSTRUMENT OF LIBERATION FOR PANAMA" AND "PANAMA HAS ACCEPTED THAT FOR TERM AGREED UPON IN THE TREATY US WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTRATION OF CANAL, WITH PANAMA PARTICIPATING INITIALLY TO LESSER DEGREE... BUT OVER THE YEARS PANAMA'S PARTICIPATION WOULD INCREASE UNTIL, UPON EXPIRATION OF TREATY, IT WOULD TAKE COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CANAL'S ADMINISTRATION... THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE A TRANSACTION AND WE ARE READY TO PAY THAT PRICE FOR OUR LIBERATION."

5. LOPEZ GUEVARA CONCLUDED SPEECH WITH STATEMENT THAT GOP HAS ACCEPTED WORD OF DR. KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT NIXON THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE SPEEDY AND CONDUCTED WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF JUSTICE AND MUTUAL RESPECT, AND, THEREFORE, GOP OFFICIALS WERE CONFIDENT OF REACHING PANAMA'S MOST ESSENTIAL GOAL--PERFECTING ITS INDEPENDENCE WITH REINTEGRATION OF CANAL ZONE.

6. COMMENT: THE BASIC MESSAGE TO PANAMANIAN PEOPLE IN LOPEZ GUEVARA'S SPEECH WAS THAT (A) US HAS A MORAL CONSCIENCE AND ITS EXAMINING THAT CONSCIENCE WITH RESPECT TO NATURE OF ITS PRESENCE IN CANAL ZONE, (B) THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS ARE PART OF LONG-TERM STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION: AND (C) COMPROMISE OF PANAMA'S SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE LONG-TERM GOAL. THIS WAS CLEARLY A REPLY TO PANAMANIAN CRITICS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND A WAY OF TELLING PANAMANIAN THAT PANAMA WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT COMPROMISE INVOLVING PRESENCE OF US MILITARY IN PANAMA FOR NEAR FUTURE AND US CONTROL OVER ADMINISTRATION FOR LIFETIME OF TREATY--ENDING IN THIS  
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CENTURY. HIS COMMENTS CONCERNING TRUST PANAMANIAN HAVE FOR PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY KISSINGER ARE A REBUTTAL TO CRITICS OF GOP WHO HAVE CHARGED THAT NATURE OF US INTERESTS, I.E. "IMPERIALISM," WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PANAMA TO REACH AN ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT WITH US IN PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS.  
JORDEN

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